THE

# Independant Briton:

OR,

## FREE THOUGHTS, &c.

[Price One Shilling.]

BRITISH MUSEUM
15
DEC
73

THE

# INDEPENDANT BRITON:

OR,

# FREE THOUGHTS

ON THE

## Expediency of gratifying the People's Expectations;

AS TO

Securing the *Liberty* of the *Preſs*; reſtoring the *Freedom* of the *Stage*; preventing *Bribery* in *Elections*; excluding *Place-Men* from *Seats* in the *Houſe of Commons*; repealing the *Septennial Act*, &c.

Dedicated to the

## COMMONS of Great-Britain.

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*Non minor eſt virtus quam quærere, parta tueri,*
*Caſus ineſt illic, hic erit Artis opus.* Ovid.

*Omnia ſumma ratione geſta fortuna etiam ſequitur.* Liv.

*Qui facilis credit facilis quoque fallitur idem.* Palingen.

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*LONDON:*

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MDCCXLII.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15 73
DEC

TO THE

# COMMONS of *Great-Britain.*

*Brethren, Freemen, Fellow-Subjects!*

OUR Condition at preſent ſeems to reſemble that of a *Ship's Crew*, eſcaped from the *Fury* of a *Tempeſt*, and beyond their own Expectations, arrived *ſafely* on *Shore*. That we ſhould dedicate a *few Moments* to the Expreſſion of our *Joy*, on ſo great a *Deliverance* is not ſtrange, but certainly it becomes us to take *Care* after this *happy Event* at *Sea*, not to ſubject ourſelves to new *Dangers* on *Land*, by forgetting to take the *neceſſary Precautions*, for fixing ſafely where we find ourſelves *at pre-*

*preſent*. Our *Perils* were cauſed by *others*; our *Security* muſt be a *Work* of our *own*.

We have often heard it ſaid, that the *People* are mutable, irreſolute, and incapable of taking Advice; we have heard this *particularly applied* to *Britons*, as if we were infected with theſe Follies in the *higheſt Degree*. We have in ſome Meaſure vindicated ourſelves, by the *Vigour* and *Steadineſs* of our *Conduct* for *ſome* Years paſt. It remains that we *perſiſt* with like *Reſolution*, till we have *gain'd* what we *ſought*, and reap'd the *Fruit* of our long continued *Toils*.

To ſet the *Expediency*, and even the *Neceſſity* of this in a *clear Light*, to ſhew you what we have been *ſeeking*, and how happy we ſhall be, if we *acquire* what we *ſought*, is the Buſineſs of the *following Pages*; wherein I have endeavoured to be *ſuccinct* without *Obſcurity*, and

and to expreſs myſelf *plainly*, but with *Decency*. I know that your *Freedom* is derived from, and muſt be protected by *Laws*; and therefore I have ſhewn you from *Reaſon*, and the *Authority* of the *greateſt Patriots*, what *Laws* are wanting to make you *for ever free*.

Far from deſiring to give you *high Ideas* of your *own Power*, to encourage you to *loud Clamours* on Pretence of *Rights*, or to raiſe your *Authority* above that of the *Legiſlature*, I have ſhewn you the *legal Path*, which will lead you to all *juſt Purpoſes*, without tranſgreſſing the *Bounds* of *Moderation*; and having done this, I hope I ſhall be *entitled* to *your Protection*, if my *Freedom* in *Diſcourſe* ſhould expoſe me [as I am not conſcious it will] to the *Diſpleaſure* of *any*.

*Country-*

*Countrymen*,

I have but a *few Words* more to ſay: Be *loyal* to your *Prince*, *obedient* to the *Laws*, *united* amongſt *yourſelves*, and *Corruption* will never be able to *enervate* the Strength of your *Government* again, nor will any *foreign Foes* be able to look you in the *Face*. The *Love* of *Liberty*, and a juſt Concern for *Property*, will make every *Briton* a *Soldier*, if invaded *from Abroad*; and our juſt Title to the *Sovereignty* of the *Seas*, will ever be maintained by the *Valour* of our *Seamen*, if the *Conſtitution* flouriſh at *home*.

Adieu.

THE

# Independant *Briton.*

AS Quarrels amongſt Friends are beſt prevented by *free Expoſtulations*, ſo it ſeems to be the moſt natural Way of avoiding *public Diſturbances*, to hear patiently the *Sentiments* of a *free People*. We have been lately told, and I doubt not with Truth, that ſome great Men deſire nothing ſo much as to have their Power ſanctified by the *Voice* of the *Nation*, and to be ſure this is a wiſe Choice, eſpecially at this Time, when we have had *ſo late*, and *ſo ſtrong* an Example of the Power of the *Nation's Voice*, with reſpect to the Great, and the Poſſibility there is, that *popular Diſlike* may affect a Man, however ſtrengthened by political Arts, or encircled by a Crowd of *Dependants*.

There are indeed ſome who have ſuggeſted, that the *People* are very unfit Judges of the Conduct of *Miniſters*, becauſe Experience ſhews that they are very *hard to be pleaſed*, as on the other Hand it is apparent enough, that the right *Management* of *public Affairs* is a Point *out* of their *reach*, whence it is inferred, that it would be better for them to mind their *private Concerns*. But ſuch Men conclude *too haſtily*, the People are far from being unreaſonable in their Demands, or inſenſible of good Uſage; on the contrary, they are very ready to bear with *Diſappointments* and *Inconveniences*, when they are ſatisfied of their Governors *good Intentions*, and then as to the *Meaſure* of their *Underſtanding*, though it be true that all Men are not *born Politicians*, yet it is not very eaſy for Folks to live in the World without *feeling*; whence it falls out, that when a Nation is ſenſibly *diſtreſſed*, it will ſcarce be brought to *believe* that it is *well governed*, nor will Men have any great Heart to attend their *private Concerns*, when their Minds are full of *Doubts* as to the *public Safety*. It would be hard to beat a *Cabin Boy* for not *cleaning his Knives*, when the *Ship* was *ſinking*.

Sir *Paul Ricaut*, who was a very agreeable, and at the ſame time a very ſenſible Writer, tells us an odd Story of a *Cook* that

was made *Prime Miniſter* in *Turky*, and behaved very well in his Station. It fell out thus, there was at *Conſtantinople* ſo great a Scarcity of Proviſions that ſuch as went not to Market early, were in Danger of coming home without a Dinner. This happened one Day to be the Caſe of a *Cook* to a *Chamber* of *Janiſſaries*, an Accident hindered him from being ſo ſoon as uſual at the Shambles, and when he came, there was no Meat left. He knew and dreaded the Reception he ſhould meet with at his Return, and fancying that he felt the Cudgel of the *Chief* of the *Chamber* about his Shoulders for this Misfortune, he let his Tongue run at a ſtrange Rate. *The* Grand Seignior, ſaid he, *muſt needs have* bad Miniſters *about him, that things run to this ſtrange Paſs, and that in the Capital of ſo* great *an* Empire, *a Man at nine o'Clock ſhall be at a Loſs for a Joint of Mutton, and that with Money in his Hand too. A Plague of ſuch* Counſellors *ſay I, now will my* Bones *ſuffer for* their Faults, *with this additional Curſe, that for ought I know, I may be* next Week *in the ſame Condition.*

As he went thus raving and ſwearing along the Street, the *Grand Seignior* came by in Diſguiſe, and ſeeing a Man in ſo great an Agony, aſked him civilly what was the Matter. *Why there it is*, anſwered the Cook, *I ſhall get much by telling you the Matter,*

*when you have heard it, you'll ſay I am a poor Dog, and that it is no great Matter, yet none but the* Grand Signior *can help the Matter; but my Family will looſe their Dinner, and I ſhall be drubbed; confound all evil* Counſellors *ſay I.* The Sultan ſtill continued to preſs him to a more particular Explanation, and having at laſt brought him into a little better Temper, he proceeded in theſe Words.

Why look you Friend, I am a *Cook* to a *Chamber of Janiſſaries*, I came abroad to-day, it may be half an Hour later than uſual, there is not an Ounce of Meat left at the Butchers, I muſt go home now with my Fingers in my Mouth, and the comfortable News, that for this Day we muſt *faſt.* The *Grand Vizir* and his *worthy Aſſociates*, are ſo thoroughly employed in enriching *themſelves*, that they have no time to enquire, whether *other People* have any thing *to eat*; if I were *Vizir*, I would undertake to have the *Markets* well ſupplied, or be cut into *Pound Pieces*, and now, what have you got by hearing my *Tale*, or what am I the *better* for telling it? Things will ſtill go on thus, till *Matters mend above*, I tell you as I told you before, no-body but the *Grand Seignior* can remedy this Grievance, little as it may ſeem, and ſo *Good b'ye t'ye*, I will go take a *Beating* as patiently as I can.

The

The *Grand Signior* returning to his Palace, and conſidering of the Diſcourſe the *Janizaries Cook* had made him, whether to prove the Abilities of the Man, or becauſe he conceived Providence had offered this Encounter, or that Princes delight to exerciſe their Power in raiſing up great Men from nothing, ſo it was, that he ſent immediately for the *Cook*, who being come into his Preſence, and ſenſible of the familiar Diſcourſe he had made him, trembling, caſt himſelf down at his Feet, ſuppoſing that the free Language he uſed of the *Vizier*, and the Government, was the Cauſe he was now to loſe his Life. It happen'd quite otherwiſe, the Sultan kindly bid him lay aſide his Fear, told him, he was reſolved to make him *Grand Vizier*, in order to ſee whither he would keep his Word, and remedy the *Grievances* he had complained of, and that he might not tranſgreſs thoſe Cuſtoms which are held ſacred among the *Turks*, he firſt made him *Chief* of his *Chamber*, the next Day *Captain*, the Day following *Aga* of the *Janiſſaries*, and thence at a Step, *Grand Vizier*. A good Miniſter he proved, no *great Politician* indeed, but to make Amends extremely *honeſt*, and one that *meant well* to his *Maſter*, and to the *People*.

Inſtances of this Sort, are common enough among the *Turks*, and are agreeable to the Genius

Genius of their Government, which is *tyrannical* and *violent*; a *Miniſter* who incurs the *Diſpleaſure* of his *Prince*, lives not an *Hour*, and in a *Week's Time* the *Vizier* is deſtroyed, who is upon *bad Terms* with the *People*. It is the ſame Thing in other Countries in Effect, tho' the length of Time ſuch *Revolutions* take up alter their Appearance, at leaſt to unattentive Spectators. *Publick Calamities* when they are not brought upon a Nation by *Providence*, are the Reſult of *Male-Adminiſtration*; and to tell the People that this is not *their Affair*, is to tell them a *Falſhood*, to bid them not trouble themſelves *about it*, is to bid them be *inſenſible*. The only Remedy in ſuch Caſes is a *Change of Meaſures*, and whenever the *Prince* is wiſe enough to make ſuch a *Change*, he will certainly have the Goodneſs to make it known to his Subjects. Their Intereſts are *his*, he can only be *great* in conſequence of their being *happy*; whence it is clear, that unleſs their *Happineſs* be underſtood and meant by *him* and his *Miniſters*, neither he nor they can be *eaſy*, and this it is that makes a *free People* more likely to be *happy*, than ſuch as live under an *arbitrary Government*; becauſe the former are allow'd to *diſcuſs* this Subject, which muſt render it more plain and familiar, whereas the latter dare never *talk* about it, ſo that *Prince* and

*People*

*People* may labour *whole Ages* under the *groſſeſt Miſtakes.*

I could give the Reader an Inſtance of a *Nation* not in the *Indies*, where the *Monarch* is thoroughly perſuaded, that his *Grandeur* conſiſts in the managing the *Affairs* of every other *Kingdom* but his own; that he becomes powerful by ſending *great Armies* out of his *own Country*, to be knock'd on the Head in other *People's Quarrels*, and that he is to be a *Gainer* by remitting all the *Money*, that he can *wrap* and *rend* to Folks, who were never known to refund *half a Crown* ſince they knew it would fetch *thirty Pence*; and what is ſtill more extraordinary, many of this *King's* Subjects, are content to believe that whatever he accounts his *Glory*, muſt be their *Felicity*; at which rate of Reckoning, they may be very ſhortly the *moſt happy* People in the World, without *Bread to eat* or *Clothes to cover* them. Now it is plain, that if they were *free* they could never fall into ſuch *monſtrous Errors* as theſe, nor in Conſequence of their falling into them, could they be made the Inſtruments of Plague and Puniſhment to *other Nations.* It is the Property of *Slaves*, that they are ready *to do*, as well as *to ſuffer* any thing that comes into their *Maſter's Heads*, and therefore they are equally dangerous as *Allies* or *Neighbours*, the only Way to be ſafe from them is to keep them

at

at the *Staffs End*, and to uſe them with as little Ceremony as they meet with from their *Maſters*, nay their very Condition requires it.

A miſerable Condition this for any People to be in, and yet how far were we from it? *Slavery* did not invade us indeed in a terrifying Manner, we were treated ſo *gently*, that many apprehended themſelves to be in *no Danger*, and laughed at thoſe who thought otherwiſe. *Lethargies* are as *fatal* as *Convulſions*, and the Patient is in the greateſt Danger, when he has the *leaſt Senſe* of his *Diſeaſe*. We are now to come under *other Hands*, under the *Hands* of *thoſe* who have reſcued us from the perilous State we were in, and the Deſign of this Pamphlet is to ſhew, what *Treatment* we may expect from them. That we have a right to *ſpeak* upon this Occaſion cannot be denied; they have often encouraged us *to ſpeak*, by aſſuring us that we had ſuch a *Right*. Farther ſtill they have led us by their *own Example*, they ſpoke what they thought, and ſo may we; eſpecially if we proceed upon *ſound Principles*, on the Maxims of natural Equity, and of our *Antient Conſtitution*. Theſe are what we ought to glory in defending, and from which we ought to think it *Sacrilege* to *ſwerve*. But to be particular.

Since

Since we have ſo lately eſcaped, ſo eminent a *Danger*, we cannot provide *too early* againſt a Return of the *Diſeaſe*; when the Body is in an *ill Habit*, a *Diſtemper* is not eaſily ſhaken off, it may be *removed* for a time, and recur with *double Violence*; our Buſineſs is not to be *weary* of *Phyſic* too ſoon, but to be content to uſe proper Medicines till the *Cure* is perfected. We have ſhook off our *old Maſters* it's true, but this is nothing, if there be any Danger left of our having *new ones*, let us eradicate the *Core* of *Slavery*, let all Tendency to an *Anti-Conſtitutional Dependance* be rooted out, this was what we complained of heretofore, and it certainly imports as much that we may never have it to complain of *again*; for ſhould a *Set* of *Men* at any time, ariſe capable of playing a *back Game*, we are undone, our Manner of *moving* is diſcovered, the *new Players* would ſo mind their *Hits*, that we ſhould not ſoon meet with a *Blot*; to be ſure of winning, we muſt puſh now before the *Tables are full*. The Caſe is ſo clear, it's Importance ſo great, and ſo manifeſt, that nothing can hurt us but our own Supineneſs, if we are *beat* we muſt be *Bubbles*, for with proper *Attention*, Succeſs may be ſecured.

The great Point to be aimed at, is the Preſervation of our *Liberty*, by removing

all the Impediments which can hinder the People from *acting freely*, and this, let them ariſe from what Cauſes they will. If *Freedom* was once thoroughly *felt*, it would be ſo generally *underſtood*, and it's Worth be ſo *fully known*, that all *Diſtinctions* of *Party* would be loſt, there would not be a Man amongſt us to whom the *Thoughts* of *Slavery*, ſhall I ſay, no, nor of *Dependance* would be tolerable. We ſhould all move then in our reſpective *Spheres*, act upon *Principle*, and do what we take to be *our Duty*; whereas, while any Relicks of *Corruption* remain, we ſhall be governed by *Foreign Impreſſions*, and be guided like *Machines*, according to the Will and Humour of thoſe in *whoſe Hands* we are. All who are acquainted with the late and preſent *State* of *Politics*, and dare think, and judge for themſelves, will know what I ſay to be true, tho' they may ſtill have their particular Reaſons for not owning it, or even for affecting to treat ſuch a Propoſition as *wild* and *chimerical*, or at leaſt *impracticable*. But Experience has ſhewn us the contrary, the ſame *Force* which has *thrown off* a *Part* of our *Load*, may throw off *the Reſt*, let us adhere firmly to the Conſtitution in *Church* and *State*; and as for any *Tyes* that our *Fellow Subjects* would impoſe, let us conſider them as ignominious *Badges*, let us diſdain to

*impoſe* on *others*, or to be *impoſed* upon *ourſelves*. Amongſt a *free People* all Diſtinctions are *accidental*; there is a *legal Submiſſion* due to Government, which in fact is the *Fine* we pay for *Liberty*; if any Attempt to lay more upon our Shoulders, we ought to convince them early of our Miſtake, by *breaking their Chains in Pieces, and caſting their Cords from us.*

The People of *Great Britain* may be conſidered in ſeveral *Capacities*, but in whatever Capacities they are conſidered, it may be affirmed that they have a *Right* to *Liberty*. This they derive from the *Conſtitution*, and tho' there are particular *Liberties* annex'd to *Property*, yet *ſome* there are which belong even to the *meaneſt*, and which every Man may *claim* who is born a *Briton*. Amongſt theſe I reckon a *Title* to *Freedom* in *Speech* and in *Writing*, or in other Words, of *Diſcourſe* and of the *Preſs*. All are ready enough to *aſſert this*, when they are angry with *Power*, or think it *ill uſed*, but the Miſchief is, that when Men are *poſſeſſed of Power*, they are apt to change their Opinions, and againſt this we ought to be *guarded*; I mean we ought to have this Point *ſettled*, ſo as to be free from all Apprehenſions, eſpecially thoſe under which *our Patriots* have laboured for many Years paſt.

I would not be underſtood to be an Advocate for *mobbing* or *railing*, I deteſt both. But as an ill Uſe may be made of theſe *Words*, methinks it would be reaſonable, to take away the Poſſibility of confounding a legal well intended Meeting of the King's Subjects, with a *Riot*, or a free and rational Diſcourſe, with a *Libel*. Let *Sedition* be puniſhed in Actions or in Words, but let us know exactly what *Sedition* is, for otherwiſe he who *hates* it moſt may chance to *ſuffer* for it. I do not pretend to dictate upon this Subject, I know this is not the Buſineſs of private Men, but I muſt confeſs that I think as Things now ſtand, we ought to have ſome *clear* and *explicit Declaration* in Favour of the *Liberty* of the Preſs, for which I could offer many Reaſons, but I will content my ſelf with one. The Uſe that has been made of the *Preſs* ſeems to merit this, by it *Patriots* have been *raiſed to Power*, and therefore in Gratitude they ought to *exert* their *Power* in its *Favour*. I know but *two* Objections that can be made againſt this, and I think to each of theſe I can give a full Anſwer.

The firſt is this, that in critical Conjunctures, the *beſt Government* that can be imagined, may be in Danger from *licentious Writings*, and therefore it ought not to be *expected*, that ſuch as are *intruſted* with the

*Government*

*Government*, ſhould countenance any *Law* for farther ſecuring the *Liberty* of the *Preſs*.

To this I ſay, that the Objection begs the *Queſtion*; that no *good Government* can be in Danger from any *Writings* whatſoever; or ſuppoſing it might be in *Danger*, reſtraining the *Preſs* is not the *proper Remedy*. Our *Creator* has left our *Thoughts free*, and placed them out of the Reach of *Reſtraint* from others, which ſhews, ſince he is *all wiſe*, that no kind of *Reſtriction* on *Sentiment*, is neceſſary to ſerve *good Purpoſes*. If Men write *Falſities* againſt the Government, they may be refuted either in a *legal* or in a *rational* Way, and I am not againſt either of theſe *Methods*. But if a Thing cannot be proved either *falſe* or *miſchievous*, I do not think that *publiſhing* of it ought to be *criminal*. Nor is it clear, that any thing has been got by this. There are *three* eminent Inſtances of Attempts againſt the *Liberty* of the *Preſs*, in our *own Nation*, and very near *our own* Times. The *firſt* was by the *Prelates* in the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, King *James*, and King *Charles* 1ſt. and the End they propoſed was quelling of *Puritans*, but inſtead of ſucceeding, they threw the Weight of *Popular Pity* into the oppoſite *Scale*, and thereby made thoſe they perſecuted too *heavy* for *themſelves*. The *ſecond* Inſtance was under *Cromwell*: He took it into his Head to gag the *Preſs*, by proſecuting

ſecuting *Lilbourne*; but here again, *Power* was defeated, and inſtead of hindering *Printing*, theſe violent Meaſures *encouraged it*. The like happened in the Reigns of *Charles* and *James* II. and has happened ever ſince, when this Notion of ſuppreſſing Papers has prevailed; for it is in *Policy*, what ſtopping *Secretions* is in *Phyſick*, a *dangerous* and *empirical Practice*, which throws the bad *Humours* into the *Maſs* of *Blood*, and thereby corrupts the *whole Body*. So long as we continue *free*, there can be no Pretence for ſuch a *Conduct*. An Adminiſtration cannot be called *good*, that will take Advantage of *idle Suggeſtions*, nor will be long *eſteem'd ſo*, if they have no other Way of *refuting* ſuch as are *plauſible*, but by directing *Proſecutions*.

The *ſecond Objection* is, that there ſeems to be no Occaſion for this, the *Liberty* of the *Preſs* appearing to be better eſtabliſhed at preſent, than it ever was in this Kingdom; the *Reſtraints* thereon being general only, and ſuch as may be thought neceſſary to ſecure the *Government* from the *Efforts* of ſuch wild and factious *Spirits*, as never can be ſatisfied with, or eaſy under any *Adminiſtration*.

But when we examine this cloſely, it will be found a Compoſition of *Falſhood* and *Artifice*. The *Liberty* of the *Preſs* is at preſent very precarious, and that which

is

is urged to prove it *otherwiſe*, will, when duly weigh'd, ſhew it to be *precarious*. If it has been vigorouſly exerciſed of late, without meeting with any *Oppoſition* from *Power*, tho' pointed directly againſt it, it was owing wholly to the *Weakneſs* of the *Adminiſtration*; the Force of which was worn out, by a long and well-conducted *Oppoſition*, and the Eyes of the People ſo effectually opened, that it would not have been eaſy to have found a *Jury* in any County, capable of acting ſo contrary to the *Senſe* of the *Nation*, as to ſerve the *Purpoſes* of a *Proſecution*; but this may not be the Caſe hereafter, the *Law*, or at leaſt the *Pretence* of the *Law*, ſtands as it did. There is a certain Treatiſe, not long ſince publiſhed, a great Part of it printed in a Black-Letter, in Order to make it appear more authentick, and which has been aſſerted to contain nothing but what is *Law*, and if ſo, we are juſt where we were a hundred Years ago. This Book is called, *The Doctrine of Libels*, and in it are all the *Star-Chamber Precedents*, fortified with Abundance of modern Judgments, and this ſent by the Direction of a Whig Adminiſtration, to prove, I ſuppoſe, that Power has a like Effect upon all Minds. At the *Revolution* ſome Political Reaſons were offered, why the *Liberty* of the *Preſs* ſhould not be declar'd the *Right* of the *Subject*, tho' it was confeſſed to *be ſo*. But theſe Reaſons ſubſiſt

no

no longer, the *Temper* of the *Nation* is chang'd, and I dare ſay there is no body mad enough to believe, that Converts are to be made at this time of Day to *Jacobitiſm* by Dint of Reaſoning. We ought therefore to be made ſafe and eaſy in this *great Point*, not by permitting Men to overturn the Principles of Morality and Religion, or of Duty and Submiſſion to the Government by ſophiſtical Writings, but by ſettling a plain Road in which Folks may walk without Fear; but to ſay that we are a *free People*, and yet to deny us the *Liberty* of *Speaking*, when we think that *Freedom* in Danger, is a Sort of *Craft* that will no longer go down, nay, is a *Sort* of *Craft*, uſeleſs to thoſe by whom it is employed, for *Proſecutions* only hinder the timorous or reſerv'd from writing, and there are always Men enough of another Caſt, who will venture the *Publication* of their *Thoughts*, in ſpight of any Riſque they run. It is therefore better for the *Prince* and *People*, that we ſhould be no longer in the Dark in a Matter of ſuch Importance, but that the Way ſhould be left open, of informing the *Nation*, their *Repreſentatives*, and the *Crown*, of any *Grievances* that are either felt or ſuſpected, becauſe this is the only way to have them examined and removed. To puniſh Men for *complaining* when they are *injured*, is unnatural as well as unjuſt,

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and to make them ſmart for being in the *Vapours*, conſidering our Clime and Conſtitution, is ſomewhat *ſevere*. There are ſeveral kinds of Writings, which are declar'd *criminal* by *Statute*, let theſe remain ſo; but as to other Writings, let us not be any longer left to the *Juggle* of a *Jury*'s finding the *Publication*, and a Court's inferring *the reſt*; but let the *Caſe of Libels*, like that of *extraordinary Treaſons*, be left to the *Jugdment* of *Parliament only*, and then we ſhall be ſure that nothing *really Dangerous* will eſcape with *Impunity*, and that nothing will be *puniſhed*, contrary to, or beyond its *Deſerts*.

If what I have already ſaid, be not ſufficient to ſhew the Neceſſity of eſtabliſhing the *Liberty* of the *Preſs*, I have ſomething to add that will. The *Caſe* of the *Stage* is recent; we all know what was pleaded in Favour of its *Reſtraint*; we all know what was ſaid *againſt* it; and what *Conſequences* it was ſaid would *follow*, if that Reſtraint took Place. We have ſeen theſe *Predictions* ſtrictly and literally fulfilled, *Wit* and *Humour* are no more; we have loſt one *great Characteriſtick* of a *free People*, let us not loſe *another* too, leſt *Senſe* and *Reaſon* ſhould follow the Track of *Humour* and *Wit*, and the *Britiſh Genius* be reduced to the *French*, *Spaniſh* and *Italian* Employments, of ſpinning out new *Syſtems* in *Philoſophy*, or la-

bouring in Defence of *Tyranny* and *Superſtition*. The Reader will eaſily perceive that this Argument might have been put in a much ſtronger Light, but the Arts of *fine Writing* are unneceſſary in a *fair Cauſe*; I do not labour to ſerve the *Purpoſes of a Party*, but to procure a juſt Meaſure of Safety and Security for the *Commons* of *Great-Britain*, that we may not at every Turn be expoſed to ſhort and ſharp *Struggles* to ſecure our *Liberties*, or be obliged to go thro' the *Drudgery* of twenty Years *Oppoſition* at the Expence of the Wealth and Spirits of the *Nation*, without having the Satisfaction of knowing at the End that we need never undergo this Fatigue *again*.

The next thing I am to take Notice of is *Elections*, on the *Freedom* of which, as the Right Hon. the *Speaker* of the *Houſe of Commons*, on a late ſolemn Occaſion told the Nation, *their Freedom depends*. Hitherto have been enacted *Laws* upon *Laws*, which as yet have had no Effect. It is notorious to all the World, that Numbers of People pretend to undertake and manage *Elections*, it is become a Trade, and there are People not aſhamed of acting as *Borough-Brokers*, which is in plain Terms ſaying, that they *live* or *would live* by *ſelling their Country*. It is as well known, that Abundance of Arts are uſed to keep *Places* in a thorough and conſtant Dependance,

dance, ſo that the Perſons they ſend to Parliament, are not ſo properly their *Repreſentatives*, as the *Agents* of ſuch as have *them* in their *Power*. A due Senſe of this has made many People think, that the Form of our *Conſtitution* ought to be altered, at leaſt in this Point. I confeſs that in my Opinion, this ſhould be the *laſt Remedy*, becauſe in every *Corporation* there is a *Succeſſion*, and I think it hard that *Poſterity* ſhould be deprived of their *Rights*, thro' the *Corruption* of the *preſent Times*. But if another Remedy is to be applied, we muſt appear to be *in earneſt*, and the People muſt be convinced, that the *Intent* of the *Legiſlature* is to extirpate the pernicious Practice of *influencing* the Minds of the *Electors*, by any Method whatſoever. If the leaſt Indulgence be ſhewn to *one Party*, it will certainly afford a Handle to *the Other*; and therefore the ſureſt way of curing this Evil, is to ſtrike at all the Methods of influencing yet known, by providing, that if there be any *Expence* at *Elections*, the *Electors* and not the *Candidates* ſhould bear it; as alſo that *Members* ſhould *purge* themſelves of all *Suſpicion* of *Corruption*, as they do of *Diſloyalty* and *Popiſh Principles*, when they take their *Seats*. I am ſenſible that I go too far, and therefore I will ſtop ſhort, but I hope the *Honeſty* of my *Intention* will attone for

any unguarded *Expreſſion*; and that my Zeal for the *Honour* of *Parliament* will excuſe my ſpeaking ſo plainly on ſo nice a Subject, the rather, becauſe *Doctrines* of a different kind have been artfully and induſtriouſly ſpread among the People, whereby their Notions, as to this Point, have been ſo *unſettled*, that they have come to conſider *Elections* in every Light, but that in which alone they ought to be conſidered. The time I hope is come when theſe *Deluſions* will be expos'd, and the *Commons* of *Great-Britain* will be brought to apprehend, that the moſt ſolemn, ſacred, and important *Action* of their whole Lives is giving their *Votes* at an *Election*, and that therefore they ought to come prepared in another Manner, than that which has been for *many Years* too common; for till this is brought about, the *End* never can be anſwered. People hot, and ſcarce in their Senſes, are not likely to act upon *Principles*, and all *Laws* muſt needs be ineffectual among ſuch as have *no Conſciences*. Unfaſhionable Language this, but fit and proper, becauſe I combat a *faſhionable Folly*, which has induced even Perſons of Rank, of Parts and of Probity to believe, that Men heated with *Liquor*, or drunk with *Paſſion* or *Prejudice*, are in a Condition good enough to give their *Votes*, where their *own* and their *Countries* Safety ſtands immediately

ately concerned, whether more to our *Shame*, or to our *Detriment* as a *Nation*, would be a Point hard to determine.

The *Place-Bill* is another Matter of infinite Conſequence, and indeed, when the People are ſo willing to be reſtrained from doing themſelves *Miſchiefs* in their *Elections*, it ſeems to be but a reaſonable *Requeſt*, that they ſhould be ſecured as far as may be in their Members, by a Proviſion that too many of them may not have *more to do* than is conſiſtent with the *Service* they owe their *Country*. I own, that on the other Side, abundance of plauſible Things may be ſaid upon this Head, more I think than upon any other; and yet when we examine them to the bottom, we find that moſt of theſe are *Arguments*, founded in *Authority* rather than *Reaſon*; inſtead therefore of anſwering ſuch, I ſhall offer a few ſhort, but cogent *Motives* for the paſſing of this *Law*, and leave them to the Conſideration of the Reader.

In the firſt Place, ſuch a *Law* ſeems to be neceſſary to prevent abundance of *Abſurdities*, for while *Place-Men* have *Seats* in the *Houſe*, it frequently happens that a *Servant* ſits as *Judge* upon his *Maſter*; an *Officer* decides on the Obedience which the *military Power* owes to the *civil Magiſtrate*, and People *obey* in one Capacity what they are ſaid to *direct* in *another*. It is impoſſible

poſſible not to diſcern at firſt Sight that theſe are *Incongruities*, which Diſorder the *Frame*, and very poſſibly may ſometime or other affect the very *Being* of our *Conſtitution*. It is therefore extremely fit they ſhould be removed, as in ſome Caſes it has been confeſſed, and a Remedy applied, and by what Rule *thoſe* that remain were diſtinguiſhed from *the reſt*, is, I think, hitherto untaught us by any of our *profeſſed Politicians*.

The *Miſchief* complained of is a *Novelty*, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid of the Reſpect paid to the *Crown* in former Times. If we conſider the *Parliaments* before the *Reſtoration*, we ſhall find but a Handful of *Place-Men* in them, and even thoſe *Place-Men* ſuch as we do not deſire ſhould be deprived of *Seats*. The multiplying of *Places* began after the *Revolution*, when inſtead of the *great Officers* of the *Crown*, we came to have *Buſineſs* done by *Colleges* or *Boards*, which ſome penetrating People have thought a *Change* neither honourable nor beneficial, for when a *Treaſurer* or an *Admiral* did any Thing amiſs, the *Error* was eaſily traced to its *Author*, and the *Commons* knew how, and from whom, to obtain Satisfaction; but the Thing is quite otherwiſe now, to diſcover where the *Blame* lies is not ſo eaſy, and to fix a Charge upon any *particular Perſon*, is almoſt impracti-

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cable. One ſees therefore that in this *Light* there can be nothing more reaſonable, than to recur to our *firſt Principles*, and bring Things back to their *antient Standard*, that our *Parliaments* like the *Parliaments* of *old*, may be the Support of the *Crown*, and the Refuge of the *People*.

Add to all this, that ſince the Method of beſtowing of *Places* on the *Members* of the *Houſe* of *Commons*, firſt came in Uſe, it has been a *growing Evil*, and tho' it be true, that there is a *legal Proviſion* againſt their poſſeſſing any late created *Offices*, yet it has been evident enough, that for a long Series of Time paſt, every Year has produced *new Places*, which by the Help of proper Changes, have been converted into *Gratifications*. The beſt Way therefore to give a Check to this *Grievance*, and to ſpare that mighty Effuſion of *Public Money*, which has been ſquandered on *unprofitable Servants*, is to leſſen the Number of *Place Men* in the *Houſe* of *Commons*, for it will be found that when Men have no *Places*, nor can have them, they will be leſs ready to create them for *other People*. One might add Abundance of Things to ſtrengthen this *Argument*, but that they are for many Reaſons unneceſſary, eſpecially for this, that every *Reader*, who will take the *Trouble* of weighing Matters ſeriouſly with himſelf, will diſcover ſo many *Ways* of applying what has

been already ſaid, that there will be no Danger of his not apprehending a PLACE-BILL the moſt effectual Remedy for creating burdenſome and unneceſſary *Offices*, perhaps a proper Introduction to the ſuppreſſing many, with which we are *loaded already*.

It is likewiſe plain that Perſons *have not Time* to perform ſuitably, and ſucceſsfully, what is required of them in double Capacities. A Man cannot be in *two Places* at once, which ſeems to be a good Reaſon why he ſhould not take upon him *Characters* that interfere with *each other*; and which conſequently put him under an abſolute Neceſſity of neglecting *one*, if not *both*. The *Service* of the *Houſe* is in a Manner certain, both as to *Time* and *Place*, with what Propriety then can a Man accept a *Poſt*, which he knows *may*, nay probably *will*, require his *Attendance* at the ſame time in ſome other Place? We have been told by ſuch as defend *this Practice*, that *Placemen* are the *People's Servants*; it is not therefore eaſy to underſtand, how a Man that takes upon him to *repreſent* his Country in Parliament, can reconcile to himſelf taking *Wages* from his *Country*, for other *Services* which he does not *perform*; or if he earns his *Wages*, how he can be ſatisfied as to the *Safety* of his *Country*, which at any time *may*, and very frequently has depended upon a *ſingle Vote*. In this Reſpect too the

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*Conduct* of *Senators* has a great Influence on the *People*, they ſeldom ſcruple to follow their *Examples*; and for this Reaſon the greateſt Care ſhould be taken not to miſlead them into a Notion, that the *public Money* may be *innocently taken* without earning, or the *public Service* neglected without a *Crime*: But if this be in the Nature of Things at all Times requiſite, it is much more ſo in an Age like this, when it is but too evident that Men are very lax in their Notions, and are willing to lay hold even of the *ſlighteſt Pretences* to excuſe themſelves from a ſtrict Performance of their *Duty*.

I beg leave to ſubjoin one other *Motive*, which will perhaps appear more concluſive than the reſt; I mean the *Authority* of ſeveral *great* and *glorious Patriots*, who have maintained this *Doctrine* for many Years paſt, and, who without doubt are fixed in this *Opinion* ſtill. Should we ſuppoſe them capable of altering it, ſuch *Conſequences* would follow as I abhor the Thoughts of; we ſhould be then at a Loſs how to know certainly what is *right* or or *wrong*; we ſhould begin to doubt of *our* paſt Conduct and *theirs*, at leaſt we ſhould find it very difficult to ſatisfy ourſelves, whether they were *right* before or are ſo *now*, which might prove prejudicial to *them* and to *ourſelves*. But the *Suppoſition*

is *groundleſs*, and to inſiſt upon it would be indecent, we may reſt ſatisfied that ſuch as have heretofore *ſupported* the *Place-Bill*, againſt all the Influence of *Power*, will now uſe all their *Power* to ſecure the paſſing of the *Place-Bill*, in Caſe any Arts ſhould be practiſed or Oppoſition formed to prevent it. This to be ſure will give the People the higheſt Satisfaction, and bring them for once to believe that *Places* cannot alter *Patriots*, but that Men truly attached to the *Service* of their *Country* are the ſame in *Public*, as in *private Stations*, and incapable of being *biaſſed* in either.

A more *favourable Juncture* than this there cannot be for the *paſſing* ſuch a *Law*. The Expedience, the Neceſſity of it have ſo *lately appeared*, that no Imputation can be fixed on the the *Earneſtneſs* with which People *expect* it; as on the other hand, the Reputation of ſome who have lately acquired *Places* is ſo perfectly unblemiſhed, that the Demand of it can be no Reflection upon their *Adminiſtration*; but on the other ſide, if we ſhould be now deceived in our Hopes, if by any Accident, any Overſight, this *Bill* ſhould be *loſt* (I ſuppoſe the Thing only, for it can never happen) we muſt for ever *deſpair*, ſo fair an Opportunity we can hardly imagine will ever be had again, and of a *fairer* we can form no Idea. I take it then for granted, that the beſt Law that can be con-

trived for this Purpoſe will ſpeedily be given us, that all our Fears and Apprehenſions in this reſpect will be quite taken away, that *national Councils* being freed from this *dead Weight*, will act with more *Dignity*, as well as greater *Alacrity*, and that the People in conſideration of ſo great a Bleſſing, will addreſs themſelves with the utmoſt Ardour to the *Service* of the *Publick*, eſteeming nothing a *Hardſhip*, that an *Independant Parliament* ſhall think fit to impoſe upon them, for reſtoring the *Reputation* of *Britain*, the long loſt *Balance* of *Power*, and the *Freedom* of *Europe*, all of which might otherwiſe have been thought *deſperate*.

The *Reſtoration* of *triennial* Parliaments is another thing which the People cannot but *expect*, becauſe they muſt be perfectly ſatisfied that they cannot be *ſafe* or *free* without it. This has been ſo ſtrongly *proved* to them, and *aſſerted* by Perſons of ſuch Weight and Character, that it never can depart from their *Thoughts* till it be accompliſhed, in *Fact* till they are reſtored to one of the *greateſt Bleſſings* they derived from the *Revolution*, and which when it was taken from them, was taken by *Surpriſe*, was taken as an Expedient to ſerve a *preſſing Occaſion*, for nothing could have brought them to endure *Septennial* Parliaments, but the Apprehenſion of another

*thorough Change* in the *State*, which very poſſibly might have ended in their having *no Parliament at all.* To dwell ever ſo little even on the moſt important Arguments which have been offered, to ſhew the Neceſſity of reſtoring this *ſalutary Law*, would take up a whole *Treatiſe*, and ſurely to very little Purpoſe, conſidering that the People are already *convinced*, and that they in ſome Meaſure owe that *Conviction* to the Reaſonings of *Perſons* in *Power* on this Subject. I ſhall content, myſelf therefore, with hinting a *few things* that ſeem to ſhew it ought not to be *delayed* or *poſtponed.*

It ſeems to be not a little odd to call a *Parliament*, the *Nation's Repreſentative*, and yet to continue them by *Law* beyond that *Period*, for which the *People* incline to *chuſe* them. One may venture to ſay, that there is not a County, a City, or a Borough throughout *Great Britain*, where the *Electors* have not ſhewn a Diſlike to *Septennial* Parliaments, and a Deſire to have their *Old Rights* return again into their Hands. Neither ought this to be ſtiled a fond and factious, but rather a juſt and natural *Deſire*, for as Princes do not readily bear with Encroachments on *Prerogative*, ſo it cannot be ſuppoſed that the People will tamely ſubmit to any *Diminution* of their *Freedom*, eſpecially when they conſider

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the *bad* Conſequences that have, and the much *more dangerous* Conſequences that may attend it. Hence ariſes that *univerſal Demand* of the *Repeal* of the *Septennial* Act, and hence in my Judgment, ariſes the cleareſt and moſt cogent *Argument* that can be offer'd *for it*. The *People* for whoſe *Benefit* Government was inſtituted, the *People* of *Great Britain*, who long ago were allowed to have a *Right* to *triennial* Parliaments, this *People* who have experienced the *Loſs* of that *Right*, unanimouſly *wiſh* and *deſire* that they may *enjoy* it *again*; can there be any thing more fit, than that the wiſe and worthy *Patriots* of the *preſent Age*, ſhould ſecure their *Affections* by granting them this Demand?

The *Repeal* of the *Septennial* Act, will be a natural Conſequence of the Care taken to prevent *Corruption* in *Elections*, and the unreaſonable *Biaſs* derived to *Members* from a *Multitude* of *Places*. When theſe Obſtacles are removed, all the *Pretences* that ever were alledged in Favour of *Septennial* Parliaments will be taken away; for if *Bribery* and *Confuſion* can be excluded at the *Choice* of *Members*, as ſurely they may, then there need be no Apprehenſion of the *frequent Returns* of *Elections*; they will be as *peaceable*, as it is to be hoped they are no leſs *uſeful* and *neceſſary* Aſſemblies, than *Aſſizes* and *Quarter-Seſſions*; the Frequency of which

which was never yet thought a *Grievance*. Farther ſtill, if but a moderate Number of *Placemen* have *Seats* in the *Houſe*, and if it be, as it has been often ſtrongly aſſerted, a *Hardſhip* on Gentlemen to be render'd incapable of *Publick Truſts*, by the People's *Choice* of them for *Repreſentatives*; then it is plain, that the only Way to *remedy* this *Evil*, is to reſtore *triennial* Parliaments; for an Incapacity of *three* Years, will be ſurely a leſs Miſchief than an Incapacity for *ſeven*. Nay, by this Means, the People's *Choice* may recommend their *Members* to *Places*, without Prejudice to their *Conſtituents*; for when a Gentleman has *ſerved* with Attention, Steadineſs and Integrity, *one* or *two* Parliaments, the People ought not, nor will they grudge, if they ſee him all the *reſt* of his *Life* in *Office*. But if on the other hand, we conſider an *Election* to *Parliament*, in the Light of an honourable, but *burthenſome* Duty, in which it may be well conſidered, then it muſt be confeſſed, that an *Election* for *ſeven* Years is a very *great Hardſhip* on *Members*; ſuch a *Hardſhip*, as may very probably deter Men who are beſt qualified, from accepting the *Office*.

It muſt likewiſe occur to every Man of Reflection, that till we have this Security, other Alterations will be of *little Conſequence*. The Iniquity of *private Perſons* bartering away their *Votes* may be prevented,

vented, the Power of the *Crown* in beſtowing *Places* on *Members of Parliament* may be *limited*, but ſtill the *Inconveniences* ſuſpected, nay and *felt* too from *ſeptennial* Parliaments, will not be ſufficiently provided againſt. The *Continuance*, the *unneceſſary Continuance*, I was going to ſay, the *unwilling Continuance* of ſo *great* a *Truſt* for ſo *long* a *Time*, is a thing juſtly to be feared. *Corruption* we know is as ſubtle and ingenious, as it is bold and enterprizing; if therefore we would ſecure ourſelves effectually againſt its Attempts on the *Conſtitution*, let us take away this *powerful Temptation* to it, for it is allowed, that when a Parliament is to laſt for *three* Years only, it cannot anſwer the *Ends* of *Corruption*, and muſt therefore in all probability eſcape it. It is true ſome Inconveniencies may attend the *Repeal* of the *Septennial* Act, tho' I muſt confeſs I do not foreſee them; but if there ſhould, it is time enough to think of them when they appear. There never was any *Syſtem* of human Contrivance abſolutely free from Difficulties, and therefore if they ſhould occur here, they ought not to diſcredit this *Meaſure* more than any other, neither ought we to deſpair of finding *Remedies* for them. The *Caſe* in *Fact* is this, that the Miſchiefs attending another Situation, are too *well known* and *too deeply experienced*. This is the Caſe

in fact, I ſay, which demands our *immediate Notice* ; and as to the *Caſe* in *view*, it muſt be allowed not the beſt alone, but the only *Cure* that can be thought of, even tho' it was expoſed to ſome Inconveniency, therefore the People in general *deſire* to have it applied.

As ſoon as theſe *Regulations* ſhall take *Place*, the Nation will be delivered from all rational *Jealouſies*, as to the Safety of the *Conſtitution* ; Parliaments will be reſtor'd to that *Reverence* and *Authority*, which they had amongſt our *Anceſtors* ; and which, from a Proſpect of theſe *Benefits*, we already pay to the *Parliament in Being* ; after this, private Men will no longer concern themſelves, as they have done, in cavaſſing *publick Affairs*, but will return to the Care of their domeſtic Concerns, from a thorough Confidence, that all things relating to *Government* are in a *right Channel*. To this deſirable Condition, may the *Buſineſs* of our *State* be brought by theſe few and eaſy Amendments, which are render'd requiſite through the Injuries done by *Time* and *Accident* to the Frame of our *Government*, which *human Foreſight* perhaps could not prevent, but which *human Induſtry* may certainly remove, otherwiſe it would be in vain to enquire or talk about them. The *Effects* of theſe *Diſorders* firſt made them the *Subject* of *publick Diſcourſe* ; and

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ſince then the *Remedies* here mentioned, have been the Reſult of every *grand Conſultation.* If therefore Experience, Reaſon and Authority have any *Weight*, if what we know ourſelves, or what we learn from Hiſtory can afford us any *Direction*, then we have all the Reaſon in the World to hope, that by having a due Reſpect to the *Freedom of Elections*, by a juſt and moderate *Reſtraint* of *Place-Men* in the *Houſe of Commons*, and by reſtoring the People to their *Right* of electing once in *three* Years a *new Repreſentative*, we ſhall put an end to all the *Fears* and *Jealouſies* that have ſo long ſubſiſted amongſt us, eſtabliſh our *Liberty* on a Foundation not to be ſhaken, and thereby fill the *People* with thoſe warm and vigorous Sentiments of *Zeal* for the *Publick*, which *Liberty* only can *inſpire.*

There are indeed ſome other things which very nearly concern the *Intereſt* of the *Publick*, and which we can have no Doubt will be immediately *taken Care of*; I will mention a *few.* The *publick Debts* have been a long and heavy Burthen on the People, a great Incitement to *Luxury*, or at leaſt to *Idleneſs*, by providing a ſafe and *certain Income* for the moſt *indolent*, and conſequently the moſt *uſeleſs* Part of *Society*, and a great Diſcouragement to *Induſtry* and *Trade*, becauſe this *Income* of theirs ariſes

from the *Labour* of *others*. Yet long and heavy as this Burthen is, I own it to be, and I hope it will be always thought, a juſt and neceſſary *Burthen*, till ſuch time as we are able to *pay it*. But the Miſchief is, that ſome *Arts* have been uſed to perſuade us, that *paying of it* is a thing that will not be *ſoon thought of*, nor have Endeavours been wanting on the other Hand to poſſeſs us with an Opinion, that perhaps a *quick Payment* thereof may not be our *Intereſt*. No Wonder then, while ſuch *odd Suggeſtions* were flying about, that the People might be much diſturbed in their Minds with *Apprehenſions* on this Subject, eſpecially when they heard thoſe who could agree in nothing elſe clear in this, that it was a *Matter* of great *Perplexity*, and of which, *Folks* of *ordinary Underſtanding* could not be Judges. A little Conſideration might poſſibly convince them of the Truth of this laſt Aſſertion, in reſpect to the *Circumſtances* of *paying* the *National Debt*; but as to the *two* great Points of its not being the *Intereſt* of the *Government* or the *People*, to ſet ſtill patiently under this *Load*, they could not poſſibly be under any *Doubts* about them.

For firſt in reſpect to the Government. It would be impoſſible to impoſe it on Men of common Senſe, though altogether unacquainted with Funds, that a *wiſe* and

*well-*

*well-meaning* Adminiſtration ſhould think it their *Intereſt* to keep the Nation under ſuch a *Load* of *Debt*, without ever thinking of Means to *relieve it*. The barely ſuggeſting this, would ſufficiently imply, that the *Government* had a different *Intereſt* from the *People*; and that therefore they were content to let ſuch a *Load* reſt upon them, that they might render them the more *tractable* and *eaſy* to be *managed*. To ſpeak the *Truth*, and why ſhould we conceal it? this was the very Reaſon offered to ſupport ſo ſtrange a *Paradox* in *Politicks*. But tho' it might be a *Reaſon* which ſome Men would chuſe to *act on*, it was ſuch a *Reaſon*, as the wickedſt Miniſtry we ever had durſt never *avow*. It was a *Reaſon* that fully proved a *good Government* never could have any Intention of continuing the *Burthen* of *Publick Debts*, longer than it was abſolutely neceſſary, becauſe ſuch a *Government* would expect not the *Service* only, but the *Affections* of the *People*. In ſhort, this *Maxim* might do well enough amongſt *Slaves*, or might ſuit the Intentions of Men who *ſought* to *make Slaves*, but could never enter the Hearts of any who inclined to *leave* their Countrymen *free*.

Then as to the *Intereſt* of the *Nation* it was impoſſible, let the Subject be ever ſo myſterious, that any *Sophiſm* ſhould be-

get a Doubt, whether we were not the *worſe* for owing a *vaſt Debt*, and paying a *large Intereſt* for it. The plauſible Pretence that this inclined *Foreigners* to *truſt* their *Money* here, ſo that we were really the richer for what we owed, might *conſole* us a little while, which we are obliged to be in *Debt*, but could never *ſatisfy us* that we were the *better for it*, or that we ſhould be *leſs Wealthy* for owing *nothing*. It is very true, that Men well acquainted with *Figures*, having different Apprehenſions of *ſome Things*, from what others have who are leſs *verſed* in *Numbers*, but does it follow from thence that any *Skill* in *Accounts* can bring a Man to believe that a *Debt* is *no Burden*, if ſo I would boldly pronounce ſuch a *Skill* to be of *no Uſe?* But the contrary is true, ſuch as underſtand *Figures* beſt, ſee this Matter in quite another Light, and have enabled us to ſhew the *Fallacy* of that *Argument*, even to the moſt *ordinary Underſtanding*. If *Foreigners* truſt us with their Money, it muſt be becauſe they can make *more of it* here than they can *at home*, and if ſo, then we have juſt Reaſon to apprehend that we pay *more* for their *Money* than it is *worth*, or to ſpeak in ſofter Terms more than we can *afford*, the End of which muſt be *beggaring* ourſelves and *cheating* them, for we can only pay them Intereſt

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ſo long as our *Money laſts*, and when they come to *loſe* the *Principle*, they will think themſelves *hardly dealt with*, whatever the *Intereſt* may be which they have *received*. To make this plainer and put the thing out of Diſpute. We know that the *Dutch* are *great Proprietors* in our *publick Funds*. But the *Dutch* are a trading Nation, a Nation careful of their *Intereſt*, and who are well known ſeldom to make a *raſh*, hardly ever a *wrong* Judgment, in *Affairs* of this *Sort*. We muſt therefore conclude that they conſider this Method of employing their Money as a *Kind* of *Trade*, and all Circumſtances, all Hazards conſidered, a *beneficial Kind* of *Trade*, otherwiſe they would not employ ſuch large Sums therein. But if it be *advantageous* to *them*, how can it be ſo *to us?* their *Profit* muſt ariſe from drawing *more* from our *Funds*, than they could do from their *own Commerce*, but we know that our *Trade* is not driven at ſo *ſmall* an *Expence*, or with ſuch *high Advantages* as the *Dutch*, and therefore we may be ſatisfied if we will be ſatisfied of any thing that they *gain*, and we *loſe* by this Confidence which they repoſe in us. We may apply this *Reaſoning* to *other Caſes*, and be from thence convinced that the *public Debt* is a *real*, not an *imaginary Grievance*, tho', as I ſaid before, it is a *Burden* that muſt be *taken off by Degrees*,

*grees*, and not thrown down in a *Pett*, tho' it may be *troubleſome* to *bear*.

But it may be objected, if the Caſe be ſo clear, how comes it to paſs that ſo many *able Men*, who ſeem to have underſtood this Subject, have been of a *different Opinion*, or what Reaſon is there to ſuppoſe that *you* are more *infallible* than *they*? To this I think I can give a very ſatisfactory Anſwer. The *national Debt* is ſwollen to ſo immenſe a *Bulk*, that a very *conſiderable Part* of the *Nation*, are ſo far intereſted therein, as to deſire that it ſhould *not* be eſteemed a *Burden*, or at leaſt not *ſo great* a *Burden* as it *really is*. Now among theſe People there are many who are *Men* of *great Skill* in *Figures* and in *Arguments*; and therefore we need not wonder that they employ their *Skill*, as moſt *People do*, for the Furtherance of their *porticular Intereſt*, without having a due Reſpect to *that* of the *Publick*. We know what an *Outcry* was made againſt the *Scheme* of that truly diſintereſted Patriot, Sir JOHN BARNARD, and yet there is nothing clearer, nothing more certain, than that this was an *Outcry* of *Part* of the *Nation* againſt the *Whole*, an *Outcry* made by ſuch as were maintained by, or were raiſing *Fortunes* out of the *publick Debt*, againſt the *Intereſt* of the *whole People* of *Great Britain*, who bend under the

Weight of it. This therefore ſolves the Difficulty, this ſhews how we are come to have a *potent Party* amongſt us in Favour of the *publick Debt*, nay, it ſhews more, it ſhews us that if the *public Debt* ſhould grow ſtill *greater* than it is, the *Party* who are for it would grow *ſtronger*, and when this is maturely weighed, it will appear a very *alarming Argument* againſt the Continuance of ſuch a *Burden*. But bleſſed be GOD, we have the *Proſpect* of an *immediate Remedy*, I mean the *Bill* lately brought into Parliament for appointing *Commiſſioners* to ſtate the *publick Debts*, this ſhews a true *Spirit* of *Patriotiſm*, and is ſufficient to convince us, that we ſhall at laſt ſee what the Circumſtances of the Nation *really are*, and then perhaps it will not be ſo difficult a Matter, even for private Men, to contrive a *Method* for a juſt, ſpeedy, and effectual *Removal* of this *grievous Load*; but I have dwelt too long upon this *Point*, and muſt therefore be the ſhorter upon *Others*.

The regulating of our *Taxes* would be a Work of great *Utility* to the *Publick*, for next to taking them off it is certain, there could be no greater *Eaſe* given to the *Subject* than laying them *equally*, ſince there can be no juſt Reaſon aſſigned, why one part of his Majeſty's Subjects ſhould bear *more* in this Reſpect than another. Every

Body

Body knows the Hardſhips that attend the *Window Tax*, which is ſo contrived, that it affects an induſtrious *Weaver* more than the *richeſt Peer*. There are abundance of Inconveniencies in the *Management* of the *Exciſe*, more in the *Cuſtoms*, but moſt of all in the *Land-Tax*, which, tho' it might be the faireſt, is, and ever has been, the *hardeſt* and moſt *unequal Tax* that is levied upon the People, ſince at the ſame time that *four* Shillings in the *Pound* is paid to the full in *London*, the Inhabitants of the *North* and *Weſt* do not pay above *one*, or between *one* and *two* at moſt. If this Miſchief was taken away, a *Land-Tax* of *two* Shillings would produce as much as *four* does now, which, tho' it would be the ſame thing to the *Publick*, yet it is plain that *half* the *private People* would be relieved who *pay* this *Tax*, and the *other half* could not juſtly complain, ſince they would then pay *no more* than they ought.

It would be alſo a very commendable as well as acceptable Work, to regulate the *Laws* relating to the *Poor*, ſo that they might be maintained like *Engliſhmen* and *Chriſtians*, yet with ſuch Oeconomy, that paying for their Maintenance, might not contribute to bring *others* into their Condition. Something to this Purpoſe was *talked of* in the firſt Seſſion of the *laſt* Parliament, and if I miſtake not, the Heads of a Bill were

were drawn up, whereby the ſeveral *Acts* relating to this *Matter*, would have been reduced to *one general Law*; but as I obſerved this was in the *firſt* Seſſions, and nothing more was heard of it to the *laſt*, which certainly was but too generally remarked by the People, who expect to feel the Hands of their Repreſentatives, in *eaſing* as well as *impoſing Burthens*. Nor would it be an improper Addition to this Care, if ſome Methods were taken for preventing the *Increaſe* of our *Poor*, by reſtraining ſuch iniquitous Profeſſions, as have a viſible Tendency to multiply Beggars, ſuch as *Pawn-Brokers*, *Tally-Men*, *Tipling-Houſes*, *Geneva-Shops*, and all other Receptacles of idle and debauched Perſons, which have been carried on for many Years paſt, with ſuch ſhameleſs, or rather ſhameful Impunity, that *Foreigners*, from a *View* of our *Corruption*, might doubt whether we had any *Government* at all. I hope it will not be thought a Crime in me to mention, on ſuch an Occaſion as this, what our *Grand Juries* have ſo often, tho' to ſo little Purpoſe complained of, when things are not reached by *ordinary Courts*, which yet are highly detrimental to the Publick, the *Parliament* is the ſole Reſource of the *People*, and to it every Man may *reſort*.

The Repeal of obſolete or uſeleſs *penal Laws*, would be an *Act* of great *Juſtice*

in itſelf, and of much *Benefit* to the *People*. It is notorious that theſe are now multiplied to ſuch a Degree, as that it would require Volumes to comprehend them. Some are arbitrary, ſome contradictory, and numbers of them unreaſonable, which is the Cauſe that many remain unexecuted, tho' in ſome Reſpect this too may prove *detrimental* to the *People*, ſince in many Caſes it is equally unreaſonable to *puniſh* beyond Meaſure, or abſolutely to *paſs by* an *Offence*. One great Source of theſe Evils has been a modern Principle, of adverting rather to the *Intereſt* of the *Revenue* than the *Service* of the *Nation*; whence it has come to paſs, that *Laws* have been exerted or ſuffered to *ſleep* at the Diſcretion of *Officers*, which is a thing entirely repugnant to our *Conſtitution*, this making *Laws* the *Maſters* of *Men*, and that giving to *Men* a Power over the *Laws*. One cannot imagine that ſuch a Regulation as this ſhould be inſtantaneous; no, as Miſchiefs diſcover themſelves *gradually*, ſo there muſt be time taken to *root them out*; but if the great *Council* of the *Nation*, would have the Condeſcenſion to appoint a *Committee* to enquire into the Number, Nature and Conſequences of the *penal Laws*, it would give us Hopes, that in ſome reaſonable Space, they would be digeſted into ſuch Order, as might render

them no longer *terrible*, but *ſalutary* to the *Subject*, which certainly would be a great and happy Change.

There is indeed *one* of theſe *Laws*, which deſerves to be particularly mentioned, becauſe it is among the Number of the reputed *Cauſes* of our *inteſtine Diviſions*. The *Law* I mean is the *Teſt Act*, for the repealing of which ſeveral fruitleſs Attempts have been made, and tho' no body would be better pleaſed to ſee it *repealed* than I, yet I own that I am very well pleaſed they were *fruitleſs*. The known Motive to theſe Attempts, was the *Diſpute* ſubſiſting between the *late Miniſtry* and the *Oppoſition*; and if in ſuch a Situation of Things, the *Repeal* of the *Teſt Act* had been carried, it might have revived our *religious Jars*, and been the Means of perpetuating *Diſſentions*. But thoſe Times are now over; Men are reſtored to the free Uſe of their *Reaſon*, in *publick* as well as *private Capacities*, and therefore this ſurely is the fitteſt Time for removing ſuch a *ſtumbling Block* of *Offence*, and for reſtoring to us as *Chriſtians* that *Liberty*, which ſeems to be the *Birth-Right of Britons*. This is ſo juſt, ſo equitable, ſo rational a Demand, that it ſtands not in Need of *Party Aſſiſtance*, as on the other Hand we have now *juſt Grounds* to hope, it will never more be oppoſed through *Party* Influence. The

Reaſons in Favour of this *Step* have been ſo often ſo unanſwerably ſtated, that it might well be diſpenſed with, if in ſo ſhort a Tract as this, I took them for granted; but as I have put the Matter upon a *fair Iſſue*, and entirely diſengaged it from *Party*, I think it may not be amiſs to offer a *few Arguments* in ſupport of my *Aſſertion*, that *all Parties* ought to think this Meaſure *right*.

In the firſt Place, ſuch a Diſtinction as this *Act* makes, is contrary to *natural* and to *Goſpel Liberty*, and is of the Nature of thoſe *Impoſitions*, which have the worſt Effect on the Minds of Men. It occaſions an idle and needleſs Diſtinction, between their *civil* and *religious* Intereſts; leads to Hypocriſy, Indifference, Want of Conſideration, Contempt of Divine Things, and ſo to *downright Atheiſm*. For when once Men have got over *Doubts*, they come to leaping over *Principles*, as woeful Experience has convinced us; for the more *Oaths*, the more *Declarations*, the more *Subſcriptions* have been required amongſt us, the leſs we have of Conſcience and Chriſtianity, and the more *Libertiniſm* has prevailed. It is plain, therefore, that upon this Topic, *Believers* and *Unbelievers* muſt agree; according to the *Notions* of the former, it muſt be held a *diſhonourable Diſtinction*; and on the *Principles* profeſſed by the latter, it appears to be

be *unchriſtian* and *irreligious*. The ſole Pretence is, that the *Teſt* is the *Bulwark* of the *Church*; but ſure no Man who is a *Chriſtian indeed*, thinks that the *Church* of GOD will be endangered, by ruining any of the *Fortifications* Men have raiſed in its *Defence*. This is both an *impious* and a *ſenſeleſs* Poſition when ſtrictly conſidered, however plauſible it may ſeem, when dreſſed out by Maſters of *Logic* and *Rhetoric*, who are able to give an Abſurdity the *Colour* of *Truth*, and raiſe an enthuſiaſtic *Spirit* of *Violence*, in ſupport of any Cauſe.

Next, I ſay, that ſincere and conſcientious *Churchmen* have given this up long ago; they are thoroughly convinced, as indeed every conſiderate Man muſt be, that the *Teſt Act* is a Civil Eſtabliſhment, whereby a *divine Inſtitution* is perverted to a *prophane Uſe*, which muſt affect every *honeſt*, every *pious* Mind with *deep Concern*; the rather, becauſe it is evident, that inſtead of reconciling *Diſſenters* to the *Church*, this is a great Cauſe why many are *Diſſenters* ſtill, who ſcruple Compliance when enjoined, and yet would have *no Doubts* about it, if it were *not ſo*. The trueſt Friends to the *Church*, are certainly ſuch as are attached to it, from an attentive Conſideration of its Principles, and a ſincere Perſuaſion that they are agreeable to the *Will* of GOD; but theſe Men are as much offended with

with the *Teſt Act* as the *Diſſenters*, deſire as much to ſee it repealed, and think their own Deliverance from the *Sin* and *Shame* of proſtituting the *bleſſed Sacrament*, would be as great as theirs. The Pretence therefore that the *Repeal* of this *Law* would prejudice the *Church*, if we take that Word in its ſpiritual and proper Senſe, is not only idle and vain, but alſo abſolutely repugnant to Truth. The *Church* of *England*, as a *Society* of *Chriſtians*, have no Intereſt in the *Teſt Act*; on the contrary, they really are, and many have confeſſed as much under Obligations to get this *Scandal* ſpeedily removed. But it may be ſaid, that the *Church* is to be conſidered not only as a *Chriſtian*, but an *eſtabliſhed Church*, and therefore entitled to defend its *religious Rights*, by the *Means* thought moſt proper by the *Civil-Power*. This is the laſt Reſource, and to this I think *two* very ſatisfactory Anſwers may be given; ſatisfactory I mean to ſuch as incline to be *ſatisfied*; for as to Men who diſpute with a *ſettled Purpoſe* of never parting with their *own Opinions*, it is a vain thing to talk of *ſatisfying* or *convincing* them. But to the Point,

*Firſt*, tho' it be allowed that an *eſtabliſhed Church* may uſe the Means preſcribed by *Civil Authority* for its Defence, yet this muſt be in things *lawful* upon *Chriſtian*

*ſtian Principles*, and the Method preſcribed by the *Teſt Act*, is acknowledged not to be of this Number, even by ſuch as are zealous for preſerving it; and who, therefore, according to their *own Arguments*, ought rather to think of a proper *Equivalent*, than abſolutely perſiſt in demanding as they do its *Continuance*. But *ſecondly*, this is not all, tho' the *Diſſenters* are politically within the *Conſtruction* of this *Act*, yet it is certainly againſt the *Spirit* of it, to put them under its *Penalties*. The *Fact* is notorious that the *Intent* of the *Legiſlature*, in making this *Law*, was to ſecure the *Proteſtant Religion*, and therefore to turn the Edge of it upon *Proteſtants*, is a thing very irreconcileable to that *Spirit* of *Meekneſs* and *Sincerity*, which is eſſential to *true Religion*. I would therefore propoſe it as a fair Queſtion, to the *Advocates* for the *Continuance* of this *Law*, whether ſuch a Proceeding does not argue an *Attachment* rather to a *political* than *eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment*; and whether it is not betraying the *Chriſtian*, or at leaſt the *Proteſtant Religion* to its capital Enemies, for the ſake of *Intereſt*, thus to poſtpone *Principles*. I would not be underſtood to argue either againſt the *eſtabliſhed Church*, or in Favour of *Sectaries*, farther than is neceſſary to their *Toleration*; but ſince I think it is clear that the *Teſt* is a Hardſhip on the *Lay-Diſſen-*

*Diſſenters*, and on the *Clergy* of the *Church* of *England*, I muſt alſo think it ought to be taken away for the Eaſe and by the Conſent of *both*, ſuch an *equivalent Security* being firſt agreed on, as may anſwer the *end* of the *Teſt* by ſome *lawful Means*.

The Care of our *Manufactures* is a Point not to be *paſſed* over; to ſay the Truth, it is a Point that will admit of no *Delay*. Our Negligence in this Reſpect has been *too great* already; and moſt evident it is, that we ſuffer by it grievouſly, and muſt continue to ſuffer by it *more* and *more*, till it is thoroughly ſearched into and effectually *redreſſed*. Tho' it muſt be allowed, that Complaints for *Want* of *Money* have been common in *all Ages*, yet it cannot be denied, that at preſent they are *remarkably juſt*. There is a real *Stagnation* of *Trade*, which is too ſenſibly *felt* to be *diſputed*, our *ſtaple Commodities* hang upon our *Hands*; and *Numbers* of *People*, who were wont to get their *Bread* by their *Labour*, now expect *Alms*. Such a Change as this is not only prejudicial, but ſcandalous to a *Nation*, becauſe it is an evident Proof that we have neglected our *Affairs*, and have made little or no Uſe of the *mighty Advantages* afforded us by *Providence*. It is therefore high time to look about us, if we are concerned either for our *Honour* or for our *Intereſt*; Petitions upon Petitions come from all the

Places

Places where *Trade* was wont to flouriſh, complaining of its *Decay*, and of the *Diſcouragements* it labours under. Neither does the *Malady* ſtop here, but like a *Gangrene*, ſpreads from the *trading* to the *landed Intereſt*, makes our *Rents* fall, and all *Property precarious*. If therefore we continue to turn a *deaf Ear* to all the *Remonſtrances* made upon this Subject, or to behave towards them with ſuch Indifference, as if they were Things that might be looked into at *any time*; we ſhall be like Men of *large Fortunes* and *larger Expences*, who trouble not themſelves about *Debts* or *Incumbrances*, till their *Eſtates* are ſo affected thereby, that *Care* comes *too late*, and *Oeconomy* is to *no Purpoſe*.

The Affair of WOOL, and WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES, has been for many Years canvaſſed in *general Diſcourſe*, and has now and then occupied the Attention of a *great Aſſembly* for a *little while*; I wiſh it was abſurd to ſay, and to *little Purpoſe*. By this ſort of Management the thing is now grown ſo *perplexed*, and at the ſame time *concerns* us ſo *nearly*, that we are at a loſs *what Courſe* to take, and yet almoſt *any* would be preferable to taking *no Courſe* at all. In ſuch a Caſe, Circumſpection, Labour and Attention are neceſſary; the thing muſt be examined into by proper Judges; Enquiries muſt be made in a pro-

per Manner of, and by proper Perſons; Stories muſt not be taken upon Truſt, or Projects received in Virtue rather of *Recommendations* than *Reaſons*. All Mens Opinions ſhould be *asked*, and ſuch as appear moſt rational ſhould be *followed*. All this cannot be diſpatched by a few Hours Attendance *twice* in a Week for a *Month* together; no, it will require a cooler and more conſiderate Method, that is to ſay, if deſpiſing Expedients, we reſolve to *ſettle* the *Matter* on a right Foundation, to preſerve our *Wool* at *home*, to provide for its being *manufactured* here and vended *abroad*, as heretofore was wont and may be again, if we are not wanting to ourſelves, which has been *too often* our Misfortune.

It may alſo deſerve Enquiry how far the *Exportation* of *raw Commodities*, the *Increaſe* or *Improvement* of *Manufactures* already ſet up, or the eſtabliſhing *new Ones*, may be promoted by the Aſſiſtance of the of the *Legiſlature*, and in what Caſes it is better to leave things open, that every Man may *act* as *Occaſion* directs; for it is certain, that as in ſome Reſpects the *Want* of *legal Proviſions* have been found detrimental, ſo in others, *Reſtraints* of this ſort have been *no leſs* prejudicial. The Nature and preſent *Circumſtances* of *corporate Bodies* of *Tradeſmen*, undoubtedly merit *Inſpection*; for as the due Uſe of *Charters* obtained

from the Crown, are of the utmoſt Benefit to the Subject, ſo all Abuſes of them are both flagrant and extenſive Grievances. The Power of *levying Fines*, raiſing *Quarterages* and other *Impoſitions*, without being ſubject to Examination, or Account to the *Body* of *People* upon whom ſuch Sums are levied, is a very unjuſt and unreaſonable *Power*, which ought to be taken away. The ſame kind of arbitrary Authority is apparently as ill-founded, tho' ſometimes ſupported by modern Conſtructions of *Law*, by which *Pariſhes* are often burthened with the *Expence* of *Suits*, determined to their own Prejudice, and are forced to pay for the *Eſtabliſhment* of a *tyrannical Government*, which though they know not how to *ſhake off*, they know as little how to *bear* with *Patience*. *Commiſſions* by Direction of *Parliament* for reviewing theſe Things, for enforcing *Authority* where it is for *general Benefit*, and for reſtoring *Liberty*, where *Power* has been *illegally* obtained, grown injurious in *proceſs* of *Time* and *Change* of *Circumſtances*, or unwarrantably *extended*, would be of great Utility, inaſmuch as it would manifeſt the Attention of our *Superiors*, repreſs the Violence and Injuſtice of *ambitious* and *avaritious* Men, and relieve the *common ſort*, who by their Labour and Induſtry are the moſt uſeful *Members* of *Society*, from ſuch Oppreſſions as at pre-

ſent ſour their Minds, and diſpirit them in the Exerciſe of their Employments. Such *Commiſſions* would alſo prove Sources of uſeful Intelligence to the State, and enable us to apply to *better Purpoſes*, conſiderable Sums which are now ſpent in *luxurious Gluttany*, or diverted into *private Pockets*, and which with much greater Juſtice might be converted to the *Service* of the *Publick*, if upon mature Deliberation it ſhould be found expedient any longer to *raiſe them at all*.

The laſt thing I ſhall mention, is the Neceſſity of enquiring into the *paſt* and *preſent State* of the *great trading Companies*, which in the Nature of Things *have* and *muſt have* a *vaſt* Influence, and are therefore capable of doing according as they uſe it, much *Hurt*, or much *Good*. Theſe were all originally erected for the *Encouragement* of *Trade*; but how far of late Years eſpecially they have been from *anſwering* that *Purpoſe*, how much they have contributed to encourage a *Spirit* of *Avarice* and *Stock-jobbing*, which is the Bane of *beneficial Commerce*; and what Opportunities they have given to *bold Projectors* and *artful Managers* to engroſs the *Wealth* of the *Nation*, which is ſure to be employed in a ſcandalous Manner when it falls into ſuch *dirty Hands*, is ſo well known, from the Remembrance we have of the *South-Sea Scheme*, the *Harborough*

*borough Lottery*, and the *Charitable Corporation*, that the Uſefulneſs of ſuch an *Enquiry* cannot be doubted or denied. It is certainly of the utmoſt ill Conſequence to ſee in a *Country*, which in a manner ſubſiſts by *Trade*, numbers of People grow *rich* by the Management of other Men's Money Concerns, or raiſing *Fortunes* by the *Direction* of a *Company*'s *Affairs*, while their *Traffick* ſo managed, is detrimental to the *Proprietors*. Neither is it *honourable* in reſpect to the Government, under which we live, that *private Men* ſhould perfectly know and be thoroughly convinced, that ſuch *iniquitous Things* are practiſed, at the ſame time that the *Publick* receives no Satisfaction, while the *Guilty* live in Affluence and Credit; nay, perhaps are truſted with *Poſts* of *high Importance*, inſtead of being *puniſhed*. Such things not only *aſtoniſh* but *corrupt* the *Minds* of the *People*, who, following the Example of thoſe they are taught to call their *Betters*, have Recourſe to *Shifts* and *Artifices*, in order to raiſe a *Fortune*, inſtead of purſuing as they were wont, the plain Path to *Riches* and *Reputation*, by an honeſt Endeavour to promote their own and the Nation's Welfare, in the known Methods of Cultivation and Exportation of what *grows*, or is *manufactured* at home. Hence the mighty Difference between the *preſent* and *former times*; the

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Incertainty of ſo many *People's Properties*, and the Readineſs which is ſhewn in embarking in *Lotteries* and other ſuch like *Deſigns*, which flatter the prevailing Views of attaining *large Fortunes* quickly, and without *Activity*, which Humour was formerly the *Ruin* of the Common-Wealth of *Genoa*, and is at preſent become very formidable in *Holland*, though far ſhort in the Miſchiefs it does there, of what it produces here. Let therefore our *Companies* be reſtrained to things within the *Compaſs* of their *Charters*, let it be made manifeſt that they *perform theſe*, and let ſuch *Branches* of *Buſineſs* as they have undertaken, and do not perform, be *left* to the Management of *others*, who by skilful Methods of employing their *private Fortunes*, would increaſe their *own Eſtates*, and do *ſignal Service* to the *Publick*.

In drawing up this ſuccinct *Review* of the *principal Things* expected by the *People* from the *preſent Adminiſtration*; I can ſafely aver, that I have acted under no other Influence than that of *public Spirit*. In Reſpect to my Situation in Life I am as much *below Hope* as I am *above Fear*. I have no Intention to *flatter* any Man or any *Set* of *Men* on the Acquiſition of *Power*, nor have I any particular Reaſon to be *afraid* of the Uſe which they may *make of it*. I thought a ſhort Diſcourſe of this

kind

Kind, might at this Juncture be *uſeful* and *neceſſary*; uſeful to refreſh the Memories of the *Great*, as to their *Promiſes* before they *were ſo*; and neceſſary to the *People* that they might inſiſt on juſt and rational *Demands*, and not to be *duped* into ſuch *Requeſts* as might afford a Colour of *Juſtice* to their *Refuſal*. How I have *executed* my *Deſign* it will be the *Reader's* Taſk to determine, it is ſufficient for me that *I meant honeſtly*, that I have *acted* impartially, that I have ſlandered *no Man*.

Should the *Queſtion* be aſked how I come to know that theſe are the *Claims*, or *Wiſhes* of the *Commons* of *Great Britain*? I think myſelf bound to give a fair and ingenuous *Anſwer*. I have heard Men of all Ranks, as well in promiſcuous Companies as in private Converſations, inſiſt often upon *moſt* and ſometimes upon *all* of theſe *Topicks*. as things which would give them *entire Satisfaction*. I have collected the ſame thing from the moſt *ſenſible* and *applauded* Papers written to promote the *Country Intereſt*, I find many of theſe *Points* recommended to the Conſiderations of *Members* by their *Contituents*. I am well aſſured that many *wiſe Men* and *worthy Patriots*, who are now in the *Adminiſtration*, have on proper Occaſions declared for theſe *Demands*, and I have heard and believe that they *profeſs themſelves* to be in the

*ſame*

*ſame Sentiments* ſtill. All which taken together have convinced me that *theſe* are *things* certainly and ardently wiſhed for by the *Commons* of *Great Britain*, as neceſſary to their *Safety* and *Security*, which would afford them immediate *Eaſe*, and be productive of *future Happineſs*; under which Perſuaſion I have thus collected and put them together in the *beſt Dreſs* I could, which tho' it may not be fit for them *to wear*, is all that my *Wardrobe* could furniſh; and if any *Man* diſlikes them therein, let him *array them* as much better as he pleaſes, he cannot give *himſelf* more Pleaſure than he will give *me*, all my Concern is that they meet with a good Reception, in Order to which I would be content to be their *meaneſt Attendant*, rather than *Maſter* of the *Ceremonies*, to which I know myſelf *unequal*.

There are however ſome other *Reaſons* which induce me to lay hold of this Opportunity, and which I ſhall very willingly confeſs. The *firſt* of theſe was the *Indignation* I conceived, at hearing ſome Men talk, as if the driving *certain Perſons* from *their Poſts* had anſwered all the *Ends* of the *Nation*, and that our Condition was abſolutely altered in Conſequence of the *Names* of the *great Officers* of *State* being *differently ſpelt* from what they were before. Alas! what is this to the *People*,

what

what imports it to many *hundred thouſand* Perſons who occupies this *Employment*, or diſcharges that *Office?* It is the *Prerogative* of the *Crown* to appoint and remove *Miniſters*, a *Prerogative* I hope we ſhall never ſee *invaded*, but the great *Concern* of the *People* is *Freedom* and the Security of that *Conſtitution* by which they enjoy it. For this they were anxious, exceedingly anxious *not long ago*, and for this they muſt be anxious ſtill, till *ſuch Steps* are taken, ſuch *Alterations* made, and ſuch *Rules* eſtabliſhed, as may *free* them from all *Fears*, and make the *Return* of a *corrupt Influence* impoſſible. To endeavour to talk the *People* out of theſe *Hopes*, to diſcourage ſuch *Expectations*, to inſinuate that *Things* may be ſafely *poſtponed*, is doing the *utmoſt Miſchief*, and therefore I cannot imagine that *any body* will have the Aſſurance to addreſs themſelves in this *Strain* to the *Publick*. In caſe they ſhould, I have been *too quick* for them; in *plain Terms*, and in a *narrow Compaſs*, I have laid down the Nature of the *People's Claims*, and ſaid ſomewhat of the *Reaſons* on which they are founded; the Writer therefore that undertakes an *oppoſite Taſk*, muſt *diſprove* the *one* and *refute* the *other*, or he will gain no great Credit by his *Performance*. Miſtakes I have been doubtleſs liable to, but upon the whole, I dare ſay mine is the

*People's Plan*, not calculated to ſerve the *narrow Purpoſes* of *Party*, but built as the *Phraſe* is among the *genuine Patriots* upon a *broad Bottom*.

Another Reaſon which moved me to this *Publication*, was the convincing ſuch as are *true* Friends to their *Country*, that the Miſchiefs we labour under are not *feigned* or *chimerical*, but *true* and *real*; yet ſuch as may and ought to be cured; this I thought was the beſt Proof of the *Falſhood* of that *Calumny*, which has ſo boldly imputed *modern Patriotiſm* to a Spirit of *Diſaffection*. There is certainly a wide Difference between *Diſloyalty* and *Diſcontent*; the Love of our Prince does not take from us a *Senſe* of our *Misfortunes*, neither does it imply any Obligations to conceal them, becauſe by *weakening* ourſelves we *injure* HIM, nor is it poſſible that the *Kingdom* ſhould be diſtreſſed, and the *King* remain unaffected. It is therefore the Effects of *Duty*, when the People make known their *Griefs* in a *legal* Way, they then make uſe of their great *Privilege* as *free* Subjects, and ſhew their Deſire of *ſerving* the Crown, by expreſſing an *Expectation* of being put into a Condition to *ſerve it*, by the removal of ſuch *Incumbrances* as *diſable* them for the preſent.

It has therefore been the *Policy* of the *beſt Reigns*, for the *Government* to ſhew a greater Concern for the *People*, than for the imme-

immediate *Rights* of the *Sovereign*. Thus in the Days of Queen *Elizabeth*, the *Miniſtry* did not endeavour to raiſe a *large Revenue*, to multiply *Honours*, or to enlarge the *Royal Influence* by an *Increaſe* of *Places*. No, they took quite a contrary Method; they were extremely *frugal* in the Management of the *hereditary Eſtate* of the *Crown*, the greateſt Part of which they applied to the *publick Service*. They repaired and augmented the *Navy*; they intruſted the *Security* of the *Nation* at home to its *natural Strength*, a numerous and well-diſciplin'd *Militia*; they encouraged a *Spirit* of *Induſtry* and *Trade*; they employed the *Prerogatives* of the *Crown* in promoting the Welfare of the *People*. By theſe Methods they ſurpriſingly changed the *Face* of *Affairs*, and from a low exhauſted and dejected *Race* of *Men*, they ſuddenly raiſed an active, powerful, and flouriſhing *Nation*. By ſuch Steps they equally ſerved both *Prince* and *People*, and were themſelves ſo happy, as to join *Popularity* with *Power*, and to be at once in Favour with the *Crown*, and on the beſt Terms imaginable with the *Subjects*. Neither was the Government ever diſtreſſed. Whatever *Supplies* were neceſſary, the Nation *raiſed chearfully* and with *Alacrity*; when the Queen aſked an *Aid* of the City of *London*, they granted her *double* what ſhe demanded;

manded; and on the other Hand, when her Majeſty had *raiſed* a very large *Sum* for a *Service* in view, which afterwards appeared to be *unneceſſary*, ſhe *returned* it to her *Subjects*. This *mutual Confidence* was the Strength of that Government, which *humbled Faction* at *home*, and *triumphed* over *foreign Foes*.

The *ſame Management* will at any time have the *ſame Effects*. To ſecure the Affection of the *Britiſh People*, the *ſafeſt* and *ſhorteſt* Method is to *deſerve* it. It is a great Miſtake to imagine, that the *People* have a natural *Averſion* to *Power*, the contrary is ſtrictly true, if they find *Power* made Uſe of to *protect* them. Our Conſtitution has placed, and very wiſely too, the *executive Part* of the *Government* entirely in the *Crown*; but inaſmuch as we are *free*, it implies that this is placed there for the *Benefit* of the *People*. If therefore the *Miniſters* appointed by the King, diſcharge their Offices as they ought, his Reign will be *glorious* and his People *happy*; but if they form to themſelves *Schemes* of *Policy* inconſiſtent with the *Frame* of our *Government*, if they are weak enough to fancy that *Attention* to the *Royal Will*, may attone for *neglecting* the *national Intereſt*, or if they are ſo *wicked* as to attempt to *divide* what the Conſtitution hath ſo carefully *united*, they muſt neceſſarily raiſe

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a *Spirit* of *Diſcontent*, for which *they* and not the *People* are accountable. This is as evident as any thing of a like Nature can be; and a better Uſe cannot be made of the *Freedom* of *Speech* at preſent permitted us, than to ſtate truly and fairly, as I have done, the *firſt Principles* of our *Government*, ſo as that they may fall under the Comprehenſion of the *meaneſt Underſtanding*, and prevent any Man from becoming either a *Rebel* or a *Slave*, for want of knowing what *Power* he ought *to obey*, or how far he has a *Right* to *reſiſt*.

A *third* Reaſon, and I ſhall mention no more, is the preſent *favourable Opportunity*. An *Opportunity* ſo *happy*, that for any thing we know our *Anceſtors* never ſaw the *like*; and ſo far as human Foreſight can extend, it is highly probable, that if we neglect it, our *immediate Poſterity* will *never ſee* ſuch a *one* again. An *Opportunity* which if we embrace, we may reſtore the Conſtitution to ſound Health and its full Vigour, by purging off every *Relick* of *Corruption*, and freeing it from every *Stain* it has contracted in a long Series of Time. But that this may appear a juſt and rational Argument, and not a *frothy Declamation*, which of late Years has become the *faſhionable Art* of *political Eloquence*, I will take ſome trouble to explain the *Nature* of this

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*Opportunity*, and to ſhew the Reader how truly it merits the *Encomiums* I have beſtowed thereon.

To apprehend rightly the *Felicity* of the *preſent Conjuncture*, we need only conſider the Complaints not long ago made by ſome of the *worthy Patriots* now in *Power*, they told us that the *Wealth* of the *Nation* was *idly conſumed* at *home*, and that its *Reputation* declined *abroad*; that our *Commerce* was in a *decaying* State; that we had ſuffered our *Allies* to be *undone* for want of *Aſſiſtance*, till at laſt we had *no Allies at all*. They inſiſted farther upon a yet more intolerable Miſchief, that of our being deprived of *all Proſpect* of *Redreſs*; they aſſured us, that the utmoſt of their Ability was to *expoſe* theſe things to the *view* of the *World*, but that by *miniſterial Arts*, our *Chains* were ſo effectually *rivetted*, that they could do *no more*; that *Eloquence* was *too weak* for *Numbers*, and that we muſt be ſatisfied with *knowing* our *Misfortunes*, the *Cauſes* and *Cauſers* of them, and *hope* for *nothing* more. What a *State* was *this!* and how *effectually* do we find ourſelves *delivered! Miniſterial Arts* are no more, our *Miniſters* are *Men* of *Probity*; the very *Patriots*, who in the Day of our *Diſtreſs* wiſhed us *Deliverance*; from ſuch Men therefore we may reaſonably *expect*, what under another *Adminiſtration* it would have been

been *Madneſs* to *wiſh*; we may *expect* that the *Wounds* of the *Conſtitution* will be thoroughly *ſearched*, and that the *great Diſeaſe* of the *Nation*, under the *Care* of ſuch *Phyſicians*, will be *radically cured*.

On the other Hand, let us conſider that the moſt *plauſible Excuſe*, offered in Defence of the *late Miniſtry*, was their being *cramp'd* by an *Oppoſition*. It was this they ſaid hindered them from *redreſſing Grievances*; it was this that withheld them from ſuch *vigorous Meaſures*, as might have reſtored the *Balance* of *Power* in *Europe*, and raiſed the *Britiſh Reputation* as *high as ever*. It was their *Apprehenſions* from an *Oppoſition*, that induced them to conclude ſo great a *number of regular Forces* neceſſary; the *ſame Cauſe* they aſſigned when we expreſſed our Wonder, that in ſo many Years of *Peace* the *publick Debt* had ſcarce been leſſened. In ſhort, according to them it was the *Oppoſition* cauſed all our *Miſchiefs*, and the *Nation* was given to underſtand in pretty *broad Terms*, that if their *Affairs* were neglected, it was in conſequence of the *firſt Law* of *Nature*, *Self-Preſervation*; and that it was ridiculous to fancy a *Miniſtry* would riſque their own *Safety* to attend cloſely to *publick Buſineſs*, while they were thus *puſhed* by an *Oppoſition*; but we now ſee even this *Pretence* taken away; we are not only freed from all our *Terrors* of *exceſſive Power* lodged

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in *bad Hands*, but we have likewiſe the Satisfaction of ſeeing, that our *Patriot Miniſtry* can receive *no Check* from an *Oppoſition*: no, the *Snare* is *broken*, and we are *delivered*. *Corruption* was the *Chain* that held together a *certain Party*; its *Links* are ſeparated, and the *Connection* diſſolved. To imagine that out of the *routed Remains* of theſe *flying Troops*, ſuch a *Force* could be collected, as might look our *victorious Patriots* in the Face, is to fright ourſelves with *Dreams* and *Chimeras*. The *Friends* of their *Country* in *Power*, and acting for the *Service* of their *Country*, can meet with *no Oppoſition*; it is impoſſible they ſhould find any *Grounds* for it, even if we ſhould imagine that there are *Men* amongſt us *bad enough* to entertain any ſuch *Deſign*, it would be to combat *Reaſon* with *Sophiſtry*, to oppoſe *Fraud* to *Wiſdom*, and the *private* Intereſt of a handful of *ſelfiſh* and *ill-principled Men* to the *Publick Weal*, ſupported by the *Voice* of the *Nation*; we muſt therefore allow it to be certain, that at *this Juncture* we may *hope all things* from *Men* in *Power*, and need apprehend *nothing* from the *Reſentments* of *ſuch* as have *loſt it*.

I had Reaſon therefore to ſay, that this was an *extraordinary Opportunity*, and ſuch a one, as we can ſcarce hope to *recover* if it be *loſt*; for when was it known that the *People* of *Great-Britain* could abſolutely

lutely relie upon a *Miniſtry*, or that a *Miniſtry* was entirely free from the *Fear* of *Oppoſition?* At preſent nothing can create any *new Diſputes* in the *Nation*, but ſlighting or neglecting the *Nation's Intereſts*. While theſe are *attended* to, Unanimity muſt reign; and therefore in ſuch a *Seaſon* all the *ſalutary Laws* beforementioned *are*, if *ever*, to be *hoped for*. I know nothing more I have to add, unleſs it be the refuting all the few *Objections* that can poſſibly be made to what I have propoſed; and as the doing this will take up no great Room, I am content to make my *Work* as compleat as I can by ſuch an *Addition*.

We may poſſibly hear it ſaid, that as under *this Adminiſtration* we can have no Apprehenſions of *Corruption*, ſo there appears no viſible Neceſſity for having Recourſe to *ſo many* and *ſo ſtrong Remedies*, when we have now in a Manner got over the *Diſeaſe*. I deſire the Reader will obſerve that I do not ſay this *will be* objected, but only that it *may*. We live in an Age wherein many *odd things* have been *ſaid*, and therefore *Suſpicions*, tho' indifferently founded, may be *excuſed*. If ever ſuch an *Objection* ſhould be made, the *Anſwer* is clear and plain. Theſe are *Remedies* of a *preventive Nature*, and ſuch as cannot operate, unleſs *Corruption* ſhould *return again*.

The *preſent Miniſtry* cannot be *affected* by them. All Parliaments muſt be *for them*, becauſe their *Conſtituents* are *for them*; they can therefore find no Difference in Parliaments, continuing for *ſeven* Years or for *three*. But this is not all, if we do not receive theſe *good Things*, when theſe *good Men* are in *Power*, when are we like to have them? if this be not a *fit time*, when will a *fit time* come? if thoſe who have convinced us of their *Expediency* will not *procure them*, who ſhall? far from any Mark of *Diffidence* is our making theſe *Demands*; on the contrary, it is the fulleſt Proof that the *People* confide in the *Miniſtry*, and the moſt *ſignal Token* they can afford them of their *Eſteem*. For if we conſider it ſtrictly, it is deſiring them to confer the *higheſt Honours* on *themſelves*. Surely ſuch a Condeſcenſion will be remembered in our *Hiſtories*, and *Poſterity* ſhall learn to *revere* the *Names* of their *Benefactors*, who fixed the *Freedom* of their *Country* on the firmeſt *Baſis*, before they had well *taſted* of *Power*. Future *Patriots* ſhall *emulate* their *Virtues*, without hoping to *reach* them; a revived Spirit of *Liberty* ſhall enflame a *new Race* of *Poets* to ſing their *Praiſes*, and whatever the *Britiſh Genius* ſhall perform hereafter, will be referred *to them* by whom it was *preſerved*.

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It may poſſibly be urged, that in the preſent *critical Conjuncture*, there are ſo many *Affairs* of *Importance*, all of ſo *preſſing* a Nature, that they are alike incapable of bearing either *Neglect* or *Delay*. But ſure this ought never to be pleaded in *Bar* to the *moſt important Affairs*, and ſuch as are leaſt fit to be poſtponed. When there are many things of *Weight* to be done, we ought ſurely to take them in their *turn*, and if ſo, theſe muſt certainly have the *Preference*; all other Matters derive their Conſequence from the *Connection* they have with our *Liberty*, but theſe are the very *Means* of *Liberty*, without having which, we cannot be ſure of having *that*, or at leaſt how long we ſhall *keep it*. This Objection puts me in mind of the *ſtrange Diſcourſes* that are ſometimes made to a *ſick Man*. He is put in Mind, that *ſuch a Thing* concerns his *Eſtate*; *ſuch a Thing* his *Reputation*; and ſuch *another Thing* his *Family*. But the *wiſe Phyſician* tells him, *all theſe things, Sir, are of great Importance; but* be well *before you think of them, your* Health *ought to be your preſent Care; and when you are able to ſtir about again, theſe things will certainly deſerve your Attention.* We muſt look in like manner to our *political Conſtitution*, if that be in *full Vigour*, we need not doubt that in time every thing *will go*

*right*, but while this is on its *laſt Legs*, it is impoſſible for the *People* to be *eaſy*, or to mind any thing elſe. We now know our *Wants*; we know too how they may be *ſupplied*; and to talk of the *Importance* of *other Things* at this time, is to uſe *improper Language*, and therefore come from *whom it will*, it is impoſſible it ſhould be *heard*.

But it may be pretended, that how *deſirous* ſoever all Men may be to carry theſe *ſeveral Projects* into *Execution*, yet at preſent it is *impracticable*, becauſe, whether we will or no, *Time* muſt be *wanting*; the *current Buſineſs* of the *Year* muſt be *done*, the *King's Affairs* muſt *not* be *obſtructed*; what relates to our *Concerns abroad*, muſt be *attended to*. Be it ſo. Still all this is nothing to the Purpoſe, and can be taken for *current Coin* by none, but ſuch as are in the *Humour* to be *deceived*. The moſt eſſential Laws beforementioned are not *new Things*, or ſuch as require *much Deliberation*; moſt of their *Forms* we have *already*, and as to the *Matter* of them, they cannot now ſurely admit of a *long Debate*, when they have been ſo often *ſcrutinized*, and have already the *Miniſtry's Approbation*. Add to this, that there is now *no Oppoſition* to delay their *Paſſage*; let them be but once *ſet on Foot*, they will make their *own Ways*, or the *People* will have

have an Opportunity of ſeeing *who hinders them.* The *Nation* has, as it were, an *interlocutory Judgment* in its Favour; we only wiſh to ſee it made *final*, and enter'd on *Record.* This is the Way to *end* all *Diſputes*, to *diſſolve* all *Parties*, to *heal* all *Diviſions*, and by uniting us in one *common Cauſe*, to make us the *firſt Nation* in *Europe*, or at leaſt to put us in the Way of being ſo *very ſoon.* Since therefore this is of ſuch *infinite Concern*, and withall ſo *eaſy in itſelf*, ſince, there is nothing wanting but *Reſolution* to act *right*, which, as I told you at the beginning of my Pamphlet, enabled a *ſorry Cook* to make a *good Prime Miniſter*, ſince there is not one of theſe Laws, but might keep *Pace* with a *Road-Bill*, or at leaſt get to the end of its *Journey*, with the *next Act* in Favour of *Weſtminſter-Bridge*; methinks the People cannot be thought *too eager* in their *Expectations*, nay, I perſuade myſelf they are not thought ſo; I am confident our *worthy Patriots* are more in *haſte* than *they*, and long as much to *perform* their *Promiſes*, as an *honeſt Man* does to be *out of Debt.*

Upon the whole it appears I think clear to a Demonſtration, that the preſent Safety and the future Proſperity of our *dear Country*, depends on the Conduct we purſue

at

at this very *Inſtant*. We have now all things in our Power, except the Capacity of judging *how long* they may continue *ſo*, which is ſurely a very ſtrong Reaſon, why we ought to act vigorouſly according to the *Lights* we have. The *old Serpent* CORRUPTION, which has ſo often threatened to *devour* our *Conſtitution*, lies now at *her Feet*, and which is more, at *our Mercy*; but if we do not ſeize the *preſent Opportunity* to *bruiſe* his *Head*, he may recover Strength to crawl off to ſome *ſecret Den*, and from thence burſt forth again, ſwollen with freſh *Strength* and *Fury*. We are *victorious* its true, but how little will our *Victory* redound to our Honour, if it appears we *know not* how to uſe it; if inſtead of following our *Blow*, we ſpend our Time in *huzzaing*, and vain of our *Proweſs* ſhewn in the late *Combat*, forget to exert that *Wiſdom*, which muſt ſecure to us the *Effects* of our *Conqueſt*.

All Parties will own the *Juſtice* of theſe *Reflections*; all Parties will agree that this is a moſt *critical Conjuncture*; let us then act upon this *Principle*, let us not *loſe* time when it is ſo *precious*, let us not efface all Memory of our Anceſtor's *Errors* by a more *notorious Blunder* of our *own*. We were *drunk* with *Joy* at the RESTORATION, we were *confounded* with the Sud-

denneſs of the REVOLUTION, whereby we loſt both Opportunities of ſecuring our *political Happineſs*, but theſe things are *paſt* and cannot be *recalled*; let the Thoughts of them however put us upon our *Guard*, and ſince in many other Reſpects, we boaſt of being as *wiſe Men*, and as *good Patriots* as our *Forefathers*, let us put the *Thing* out of *doubt*, and *ourſelves* out of *Danger*, BY BEING IN OUR SENSES NOW.

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